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ABSTRACT

A survey investigated what employers in the Thames Valley, England, were looking for in their recruitment of young people aged 16-18. Of 600 companies, 37 percent responded. Twenty percent did not recruit at that age level; 76 percent required two advanced ("A") levels and Pass grades. Recruitment of young people with a General Certificate of Secondary Education showed no clear pattern relating the number of subjects, grades achieved, and type of subject to the job offered. Personal qualities such as aptitude, reliability, and willingness to tackle any task were important at every level of recruitment. Companies rated highly skills in listening, comprehension, speaking, and new technology. Eighty-three percent would not consider taking on a student with learning difficulties. A comparison study of recruitment in Augsburg, West Germany, collected information on the school system in general and on the vocational training system, which consists of the dual-system, apprenticeship that combines practical on-the-job learning with theoretical instruction in vocational schools, and the full-time vocational education system. Another survey collected information on vocational education and training systems for young people in the region of Pays de la Loire, France. Only 10.5 percent of young people failed to continue their education; the large number of continuing students puts a burden on the educational system. (The Thames Valley survey is appended.) (YLB)

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CCi COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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"What do Employers want from Education?"

An Employer Survey of 16-18 year olds in The Thames Valley

Compiled for

Thames-Chiltern Chamber of Commerce & Industry

75th

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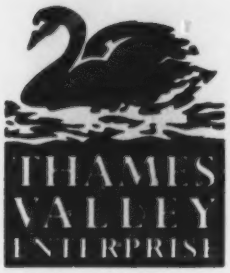

The CCi Survey 1990

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Compiled on behalf of Thames-Chiltern Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Thames Valley Enterprise by:

J. Michael Hawe

Part I

Executive Summary

"What do Employers want from Education?"

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - What do Employers want?

Why ask the question?

* The 1990 Thames-Chiltern CCi Survey was prompted strongly by a desire to find out what employers were looking for in their recruitment of young people from 16-18 in the Thames Valley.

* Education and Training is a hot issue. Is the education service providing the quality of recruit that is needed? Is Industry really interested in extending training to the whole cohort of recruits? What are our partners and neighbours in West Germany and France doing?

* Will the introduction of a National Curriculum help solve the problem? Will standards rise? Will the majority of pupils continue education and training up to 18?

* Do we need a British Higher Diploma or Baccalaureate? Will the present educational system serve the needs of employers in the future? If not, how should it be reformed?

* There is unanimous agreement that we need a skills revolution. How will we achieve it?

* This survey should have a part to play in: informing opinion; bringing schools and employers closer together and in prompting governors to take action.

What did the employers say?

* 20% of companies do not recruit at the 16-18 level.

* Recruitment in the Thames Valley lies within the following context:

  54% continue in full-time education compared to 50% in the U.K. overall, 78% in France and 90% in the Federal Republic of Germany.

* Employers recruiting at advanced level ask for two passes, which is the equivalent basic requirement for university or polytechnic.

  A Director of a French company made the following pertinent comment:

  "We would find it difficult to recruit someone with a certificate showing study in only two subjects. English applicants here will be at a disadvantage."

  We may have much to learn from the French who have created two new baccalaureats (the technical and the professional) in order to reach their goal of 80% of students to Bac level by the year 2000.

* Recruitment at GCSE level showed no clear pattern relating the number of subjects, the grades achieved and the type of subject to the job offered.

  Concern was raised over the lack of a standard leaving certificate. Judging the level of a candidate by performance in single subjects is not easy.

  In France and Germany a standard leaving certificate has been designed for the **majority** to achieve.

* 80% of respondents thought that the principle of having to repeat a year if a student fails to make the grade should be introduced into schools in the Thames Valley.

  In the majority of Continental countries, upwards of 20% of a year group repeat a year.

* Personal qualities like aptitude, reliability and willingness to tackle any task are seen to be as important as more academic achievements at <u>every</u> level of recruitment.

  The unanimous verdict of employers is that after eleven years of school they should expect that recruits will have mastered basic arithmetical skills, should be able to express themselves in standard English and should be literate. Poor performance at <u>basic</u> level was far too prevalent to be acceptable. This view was strongly echoed in Nantes and in Augsburg.

* Listening, comprehension and oral skills are very highly regarded.

* Creativity in writing and the study of literature are regarded as the least important areas of study.

* New technology (word processing and touch typing), even for non-secretaries, is very highly rated.

* The ability to speak a language other than English was highly regarded by only 5% of companies. 25% felt it was not important. A useful asset was the verdict by the majority.

* Employers in Augsburg and Nantes regard ability in foreign languages very highly indeed.

* German was said to be the most important language for their commercial interest by 50% of respondents. Yet, almost 90% of children in the Thames Valley study French as their first foreign language.

* 83% of respondents would ***not*** consider taking on a student with learning difficulties. Much more positive attitudes were shown in Augsburg and Nantes where special pre-vocational courses are put on to give students an alternative to the school leaving certificate and thus gain entry into training.

* Twenty years after the introduction of the Comprehensive School into most areas of the Thames Valley, employers fail to regard it as the best system.

  85% of respondents would prefer a different organisation of secondary education than we have at present.

  The majority favour a move at ***age 14*** into Grammar, Technical and General Schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conclusions

* The System of the Federal Republic of Germany is undoubtedly the most impressive organisation for training young people. However, any system which can delay a young person's taking up a job until he/she is in the late twenties or early thirties has very serious drawbacks.

* The French development of the Bac Pro (Baccalauréat Professionnelle) is set to attract increasing numbers of young people as new specialisms come on stream. The fact that it bears the 'baccalauréat' name, which is internationally held in high esteem, should give a clue to the type of development needed here.

  We should note, however, that the massive addition in numbers of students going on to universities without a matching expansion in buildings and teachers threatens to jeopardise the function of the whole higher education system in France.

* Finally, if the 16-19 revolution is to come about, we must put an intelligible ***System*** into place. What is impressive in Augsburg and Nantes is the way in which ***clear pathways*** are laid down for students and their parents to follow. Success at one level is an automatic key to entry at the next level.

Part II

"Why ask the Question?"

"What do Employers want from Education?"

Why ask the Question?

The National Mood

Sir Bryan Nicholson in his foreword to the CBI's influential report "Towards a Skills Revolution" says:

"Education and Training are at the top of nearly everybody's agenda for action. The skills of the United Kingdom's workforce compare poorly with those of our principal competitors".

Professor Charles Handy has widened the debate by pointing out that 70% of jobs will require **Brain Skills** by the year 2000.

So, standards must rise and the number of students staying on after compulsory schooling must improve dramatically.

The Government's first response to the call for higher standards in education has been to introduce for the first time a National Curriculum. By the mid nineties it is said that the new curriculum will have raised everyone's expectations of what children can achieve and thereafter will begin to make up ground with our Continental cousins whose basic educational achievements are said to be much greater than ours.

The Government's second major response has been to set up a network of Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and to invest in them the task of providing and controlling training at a local level.

By the year 2000, 50% of the 16-19 age group, according to the CBI Report, should achieve NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) level III or its academic equivalent i.e. two 'A' levels and 5 GCSE passes at A - C grade.

By 1995 immediate moves should ensure that <u>almost</u> all young people should attain NVQ level II or its academic equivalent i.e. five GCSEs at A - C grade.

Cash credits are to be given to 16 year olds to fund the learning costs associated with this revolution.

Meanwhile demographic trends mean that there are fewer young people available. On an index of 100 in 1970, the U.K. population in this age group has fallen 26 points from 120 to 94, in Germany the fall has been even more dramatic going down 50 points from 122 to 72, whilst in France it has only fallen by 10 points from 100 to 90.

The implications are clear - we will have to make much greater demands on those sections of the population that have traditionally been ignored - the average and below average school student.

"Companies, schools and Government have all failed to address the needs of the average employee" opines the Financial Times.

"We seem to be partly trapped in a tradition which produced a society based on manual labour and one which at the same time regarded education and training beyond 16 as a privilege given to the minority" (D. Wadsworth - Chief Education Officer, Bedfordshire).

Perhaps the last word, tellingly, should go to Monika Renz of the Berlin State Education Department.

"People in Germany do not think you have to go to elite schools to be a success. The failure or success of a child is determined by whether their transfer into the working world is successful or not".

The Thames Valley

In response to this national debate, the Thames-Chiltern Chamber of Commerce and Industry has decided to carry out a major survey of what in 1990 the local employer wants from the Education system and what are the pointers to support the view that a skills revolution is imminent.

We are not, of course, an isolated region here. Not only are we one of the major economic areas of Great Britain but we are also a dynamic part of the wider European Community. It seemed logical, therefore, to extend our enquiries to partner chambers in Augsburg (Bavaria) and to Nantes (Pays de la Loire).

We trust the answers to the questions will give an interesting snapshot of where we are and at the same time prove a good basis for plans to raise standards and thus contribute to the skills revolution.

The critical debate intensifies - Thames-Chiltern Chamber intends to play an active role and to make a very positive contribution.

A note of caution

"Looking in from the outside at another country's educational system has some of the characteristics of observing other people's marriages. It is a seductively attractive activity which can produce startlingly useful insights into one's own experience, but in which distinguishing between appearances and reality is complicated by the 'outsider' status of the observer and the natural pride of the observed". **(H.M.I. Report: "Education in the Federal Republic of Germany").**

If there are indeed problems in the Thames Valley they will require Thames Valley solutions!

Part III

A Commentary on the Major Outcomes and Implications of the Thames-Valley Survey

A Commentary
on the major outcomes and implications of the Thames Valley Survey

1. **The Sample**

   - ***600 companies approached - a 37% response received.***
     (see Questionnaire Appendix)

2. **Recruitment at 16-18 years of age**

   - ***20% of companies do <u>not</u> recruit at the 16-18 level.***

   - ***Total number of employees in the sample: 28,397.***
     Recruits at 16-18 = 3.4%.

   The Context

   The % of 16 year olds entering employment in 1989 for this region:

Berkshire:	***34.4% of which 13.2% were YTS;***
Buckinghamshire:	***36.5% of which 8.4% were YTS;***
Oxfordshire:	***32 % of which 11.0% were YTS.***

   The % of 16 year olds continuing their education <u>full-time</u> in schools or colleges in 1989:

Berkshire	*Bucks*	*Oxon*	*U.K.*	*France*	*Germany*
59%	*55%*	*52%*	*50%*	*78%*	*69%*

3. **Recruitment at 'A' Level:**

   - ***76% of companies require two 'A' Levels***

   - ***76% of companies require Pass grades (i.e. E+)***

   - Although English is commonly requested as a desired 'A' level, do companies realise that 'A' English is almost exclusively a *Literature Course?*

   - In Augsburg employers who recruited at this level (Abitur) were insistent that the trainee still had to complete his/her apprenticeship, even though one year remission was given for the higher leaving certificate.

     Both in Augsburg and in Nantes strong reservations were expressed concerning the limitations of such a specialised course as the one we have in Britain.

     A French colleague put it this way:

     "Whilst we have a lot of respect for your higher education system for which your 'A' levels are designed as a specialised entry, we would find it <u>very difficult</u> to recruit someone who only had a certificate in two subjects. English applicants here will definitely be at a disadvantage."

     There is call for an Advanced Diploma or British Baccalaureate to replace 'A' levels. Yet the French and Germans see no reason to replace Abitur or the General Baccalaureate - instead they introduce other appropriate courses and give them equal status. Any person with an Abitur or a Bac has a right to a University place of his/her choice.

4. **Recruitment of students at GCSE Level**

* ***There is no clear pattern which relates the number of subjects, the grades achieved and the type of subject to the type of job to be filled.***

* ***We should note that 42% of the companies recruiting at this level require higher grade (A - C) passes for their recruits.***

Comment

* Here we have a mis-match. The great majority of students who have 4+ A-C passes stay in full-time education. Employers trying to recruit at this level will either be frustrated or will take on what they regard as second best.

  This raises a serious issue. Matriculation i.e. five 'O' level passes including English and Maths, was never a target aimed at the majority. It was a staging post on the way to eventual university entry. The GCSE examination is assessed at seven grades with the average being a D. This does not appear to be an ideal system if you want the majority to obtain A, B or C.

  If employers are to continue to recruit at this level, they would do well to fix an appropriate entry level which is unlikely to be geared to University entrance.

  This is a well accepted fact in Augsburg and Nantes where the performance of average students is acclaimed. In Augsburg the Secondary Modern Schools (Hauptschulen) cater for the lowest 40% of the intelligence range - 90% of whom obtain the standard leaving certificate which is the passport throughout Germany to a training place. This, compared to ours, sounds like a remarkably well-designed system.

  Passes at A-C in five subjects is the equivalent of a Technical School Leaving Certificate (Realschulabschluß) which is well regarded, which gives a place on more demanding training courses, but which is not the standard basic requirement for entry and thus is kept well within its context.

* ***What constitutes an acceptable standard secondary leaving certificate in the Thames Valley?***

  When certificates are issued only on the basis of single subject results, it makes it extremely difficult for employers to set an appropriate level for recruitment. This almost certainly works against the interests of the average and slightly below average student. How, ask two employers, do you judge the following: (GCSE results are awarded on a 7-point scale A-G).

	Engl	Maths	Sci	French	Hist	Geo	Techn Draw	Home Econ	Comp Stud
Student X	B	E	E	C	D	C		G	F
Student Y	E	B	C	F	E	D	C		G

In fact if you gave scores from 7 - 1 for A - G grades, both students would earn 29 points. What number of points should then be realistically set for an award of a Standard School Leaving Certificate (and what points for an Intermediate or Higher Certificate)? Should English, Maths, Science or a language be weighted to increase their value? Such a system would bring us into line with the other continental European countries.

5. **Recruitment without specifying educational standard**

* ***Aptitude, reliability, willingness to tackle any task and honesty were the essential criteria here.***

There was ample evidence in Augsburg that once employers were assured of a trainee who had a standard school leaving certificate from secondary modern school, they were then much more able to concentrate on these personal qualities which they determine to be crucial in deciding how to invest training money.

6. **Specialised Subject Areas**

Maths

* ***Employers in their responses here were very traditional. Given a range of basic and more complex skills, they almost universally chose the basic skills of multiplication and division and of mental arithmetic as being the most important.***

* ***Colleagues in France and Germany made exactly similar comments that the most common failures in students leaving school were in these basic areas.***

English

* ***Basics - spelling, punctuation and grammar were seen to be the most required skills (and later in the questionnaire the areas where too many students were said to be deficient).***

* Interestingly, the skills of listening and comprehension and oral skills were overwhelmingly regarded as being the most important supplement to good basic writing skills.

* Schools have an important, if difficult task, of persuading employers that creativity and knowledge of literature are keys to the development of many of the essential personal qualities they so admire. Confidence, the ability to understand and sympathise with fellow workers, loyalty and integrity as well as creativity and intuitive thinking are all the best products of a study of literature and the arts. Schools are failing to get that message across. Only one company made such a comment!

7. **New Technology - new skills**

* ***Word Processing and Touch Typing, even for non-secretaries, are seen to be of high value by almost half of the respondents.***

  Students and teachers should note how applications can be considerably enhanced at all levels of ability, by people who have taken time to develop these dexterous practical skills.

8. **Modern Languages**

* ***The ability to speak a language other than your own was only highly regarded by some 5% of respondents. Most thought of it as a useful asset and valued it mainly as a practical skill not as a clear indicator of higher academic achievement.***

* ***In Augsburg and in Nantes, the ability to speak a foreign language was everywhere highly regarded. The study of languages in Augsburg formed the basis of every apprentice's course including hairdressers and craft level fitters.***

* ***Whereas French companies refined their list of applicants by looking at performance in Maths, French and English, and the Germans by looking at performance in Maths, German and English, our companies are essentially concerned with performance in Maths, Science and English.***

* ***No respondent in the whole of this survey listed a pass in a foreign language as a requirement for entry into the company. 25% of the companies felt that ability in languages was of no importance to them.***

  It will clearly take more than inclusion of a Modern Language in the National Curriculum to improve linguistic skills in this region.

* ***A vote of 50% for German as the most important language for companies in the Thames Valley has important ramifications and needs to be carefully addressed by schools and LEAs in the region. Almost 90% of pupils in the Thames Valley study French as their first foreign language.***

  Should there not be a strong move to establish German as an equal first language in the schools?

9. **Other Skills**

* ***All companies regarded practical skills in the highest light and most likely to add value to applications.***

  Schools and students should take careful note of this.

10. **Pupils with learning difficulties**

* ***The fact that 83% of respondents would not consider taking a student with learning difficulties, suggests that some drastic action is required. At least 10% of the age group will fall into this category and special programmes will be needed.***

* ***In both Augsburg and Nantes, special pre-vocational programmes are set up in the schools in order to bring these students up to the very basic level acceptable for apprenticeships or basic vocational certificates.***

11. **Recruiting Procedures**

* ***The key message here from all three countries is that work experience for both pupils, and increasingly for teachers, needs maximum attention.*** This can only mean even greater contact between schools, colleges and companies and that should dictate a dominant pattern for the nineties. The value of careers services to schools and particularly within schools is fully recognised. This is an area where we here in the Thames Valley have a much more developed system than our colleagues in Augsburg or Nantes.

12. **School Organisation**

Only the French, the Danes and the British have a comprehensive school system to cater for all students up to the age of 16.

However, in the French Collège, there are clearly defined courses centrally determined along which students increasingly move after the age of 14.

Twenty odd years after the introduction of the comprehensive system into the majority of LEAs in this area, employers still fail to regard it as the best system.

* ***83% of employers in this survey would prefer a different organisation of secondary education than we have at present.***

The majority would prefer to see children at <u>fourteen</u> moving into Grammar, Technical and general schools. This is simply not a case of reverting to the old and yearned for Grammar School system. It does suggest some positive thinking about what would best prepare young people to develop their aptitudes and talents.

* ***With just 17% of employers giving the Comprehensive School first place,*** School Governors and LEA's have a daunting task of pursuading the companies that their schools are indeed ideally placed to produce the sort of recruits Industry is looking for. The Thames Valley is, after all, reputed to have some of the finest comprehensive schools in the Country.

* ***80% of respondents voted to let children repeat a year until they reach the desired level to enable them to follow the next stage of the course.*** Whilst this practice is accepted in most countries of continental Europe, with all the problems it brings for the 20% of students affected, it is thought to be generally unpopular here with parents. Wandsworth recently faced a barrage of protest when they appeared to be suggesting some practices along these lines.

* The U.K. is one of the very few countries that has this fixation with progression by age as opposed to achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

* The West German Dual-System is undoubtedly the most impressive organisation for training young people. It meticulously maintains the balance between continuing education and skills training that is responsible, in the end, for producing one of the most flexible and adaptable workforces in the world.

* The French development of the Bac.Pro (Baccalauréat Professionelle) is set to attract increasing numbers of young people as new specialisms come on stream. The fact that it bears the 'Baccalauréat' name, which is internationally held in high esteem, should give a clue to the sort of developments we need here.

* The 'A' level examinations must broaden both in terms of the number of subjects studied and the increasing skill based core that is to be developed.

* Finally, if the 16-19 skills revolution is to come about, we must put an intelligible **System** into place. What is impressive in Augsburg and in Nantes is the way in which **Clear Pathways** are laid down for students and their parents to follow. Action plans are easy to construct as the systems are clear cut with qualifications tiered so that success at one level is an automatic key to entry at the next level.

  That we completely lack any systematic series of pathways is best understood when one tries to describe to someone in Augsburg or in Nantes exactly how things work here after compulsory school is over and before young people can take their place in a trained workforce.

* To conclude here is a quotation from the ***Statistical Bulletin 1/89*** published by the Department of Education and Science. It fails to offer any statistics on post-16 vocational education as:

  "Only limited information is available on vocational qualifications gained in further education and this area is complicated by multi-part examinations". Well put.

* This survey, we hope, will go some way to clear the fog and help lay down guidelines for the development of the required structure.

  What has to be done is obvious - there has never been a better time for Industry and Education to get together to provide exactly what is required to make maximum use of our most precious resource, - our youth.

Part IV

Analysis of

the Thames-Valley Questionnaire

Analysis of the Thames Valley Questionnaire

Aim:

* To draw a picture of present day recruitment of 16-18 year olds from schools and colleges
* To discover what educational standards are being sought and why
* To analyse what employers are looking for in the key subject areas of Mathematics, English and Modern Languages
* To discover what personal qualities are most highly regarded
* To ascertain the views of employers regarding the organisation of English schools in the State System in comparison with school organisation in Continental Europe
* To review recruitment procedure

The Sample

The sample, taken as representative of the 37,000 businesses in the Thames Valley area, was selected by SIC category as follows:

1. Hi-Tech Manufacturing	110 companies
2. General Manufacturing	180 companies
3. Wholesale/Retail	90 companies
4. Trade Services	90 companies
5. Professional Services	130 companies
TOTAL	600 companies

A 37% response was achieved broken down by category as follows:
1: 53% 2: 39% 3: 31% 4: 30% 5: 31%.

Questionnaire Part I - Recruitment at 16-18

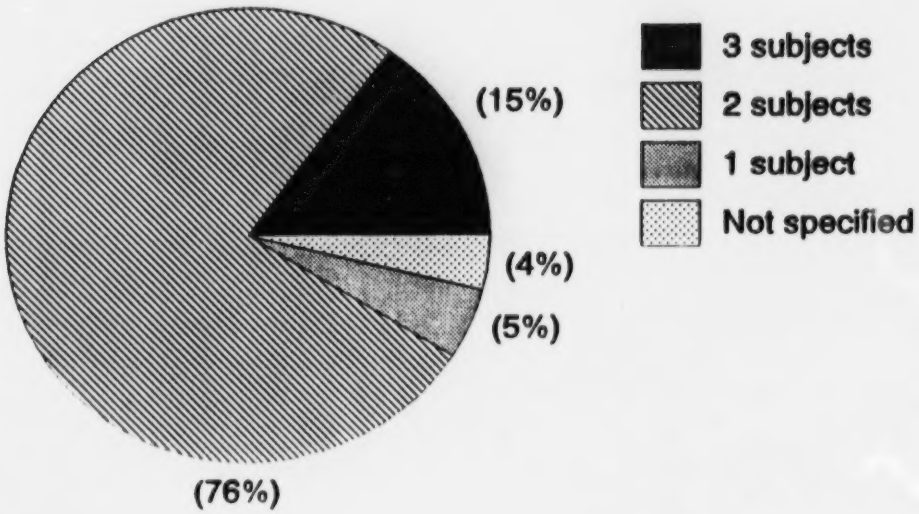
Category	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Employees in sample	4,814	7,804	1,782	10,704*	3,293	28,397
% Recruits 16-18	2%	3%	5%	2%	5%	3.4%

* One company in this category accounted for over 5,000 employees yet recruited no one in the 16-18 range.

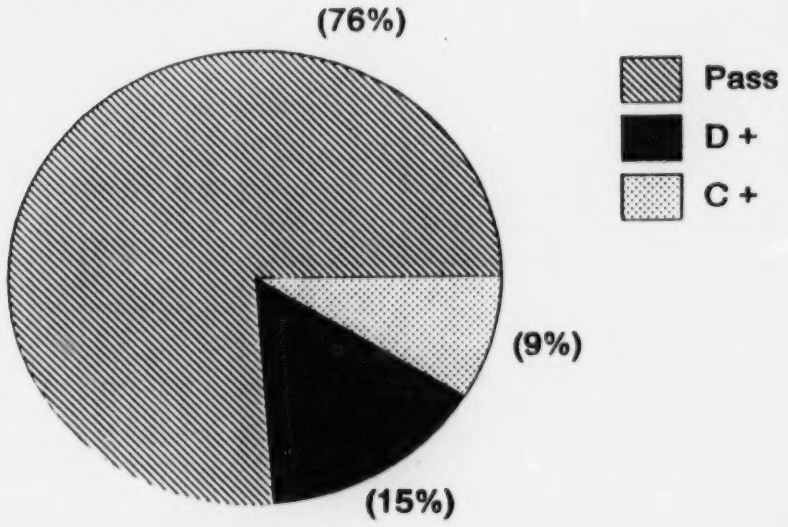
The percentage of companies, according to returns, who do not recruit at 16-18 is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
26%	32%	12%	12%	18%

How many 'A' levels required?



What grade?



* Which subjects?

Maths, English, Physical Sciences account for 95% of the subjects asked for. There were isolated requests for: Technical Drawing (none for Craft/Design/Technology!), Business Studies, German and a few others.

* Why 'A' Levels?

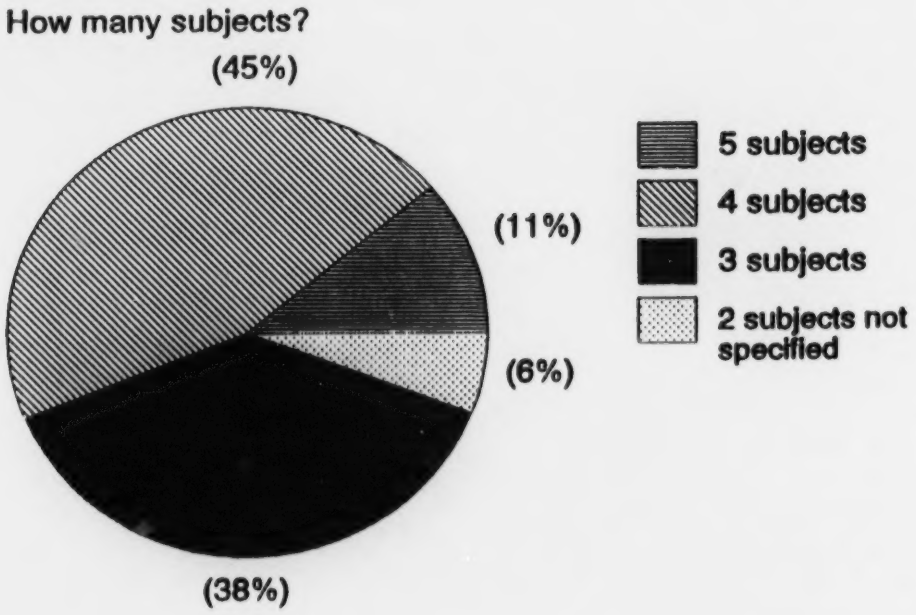
50% expect trainees to go on to take further higher level examinations
50% say the intellectual demands are high.

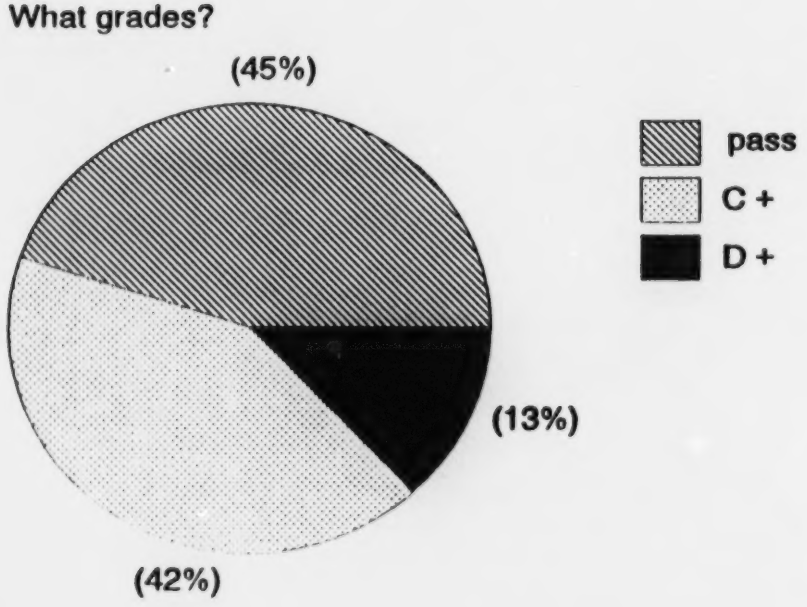
Response by category of company

Category of Company	No. of 'A' required	Response
1 - Hi-Tech Manufacturing	2	60%
	3	24%
	1	16%
2 - General Manufacturing	2	63%
	3	31%
	1	6%
3 - Wholesale/ Retail	Return not statistically significant	
4 - Trade Services	2	100%
	3	0%
	1	0%
5 - Professional Services	2	81%
	3	6%
	not specified	13%

Recruitment at GCSE Level

* How many subjects?





The requirements tend to fall into three categories which between them account for almost 100% of the responses:

English + Maths Maths + Physics Maths + a Science

Response by category of company

Category of Company	How many subjects	Response
1	4	50%
	3	50%
2	4	48%
	3	38%
	2	11%
	5	3%
3	5	43%
	4	36%
	3	15%
	2	6%
4	3	55%
	4	40%
	2	3%
	not specified	2%
5	4	53%
	3	30%
	5	12%
	2	5%
Average	4	45.4%
	3	37.6%
	5	11.6%
	2	5%
	not specified	0.4%

Category of Company	What grades	Response
1	C+	60%
	Pass	36%
	D+	4%
2	Pass	46%
	C+	38%
	D+	16%
3	Pass	50%
	C+	45%
	D+	5%
4	Pass	60%
	C+	30%
	D+	10%
5	C+	40%
	D+	30%
	Pass	30%
Average	C+	42.6%
	Pass	44.4%
	D+	13%

* **Which subjects?**

	Category of Company			
1	2	3	4	5
Maths, English Physics (predominently)	Maths English Maths Science	English + Maths	Maths, English, Science (predominently)	English Maths Science (predominently)

Recruitment at Vocational Levels

* Over 60% of companies recruited at B.Tech Level with the majority of the others qualified by EITB or CITB.

* 90% of companies still look at GCSE results before selecting their recruits.

Recruitment at YTS Level

* 66% of respondents found YTS a good introduction to work and training.

* 35% of respondents used their own YTS programme as the basis for selection of recruits.

Recruitment without specifying educational standard

* 36% of respondents indicated that GCSE passes are not the best indication of suitability.

* 28% thought that patience and determination were the outstanding requirements for the job on offer, whilst

* 36% regarded personal characteristics as by far the most important ingredient in their selection criteria.

The most important characteristics sought in recruits in this category were:

1 Aptitude
2 Reliability
3 Willingness to tackle any task
4 Honesty.

Dexterity, confidence and a pleasant manner featured next in importance. There was universal agreement that the *three least important characteristics* were:

1 appearance
2 physical strength and
3 having a family known to the company.

The only other widely mentioned characteristic was: *eagerness to get the job.*

Questionnaire Part II: Specialised Subject Areas

Mathematics

What do employers mean by *Numeracy Skills?* Predominently employers are looking for the basic skills of

* Solving problems using multiplication and division with numbers of any size and
* Mental arithmetic involving 4 digit numbers
* Converting fractions to decimals and percentages was highly placed in importance
* Calculations involving quantities and ratios were seen to be important but more specialist.

Other very important skills which recruits should possess are:

* the ability to work in the abstract
* the ability to estimate
* the ability to use quantities to estimate
* the ability to understand the world through measurement.

Calculators - Many comments reflected the view that all children should know how to use a calculator for a variety of purposes.

They equally strongly believe that children should learn the basic computational skills without calculators so that they understand the processes they are performing. *"You do not need a calculator to know what 5% of 40 is."*

Mechanical use of calculators inhibits reasoning which it is so esssential to develop in order to tackle problems.

English

The skills valued most highly by employers when they stipulate a pass in English are those sometimes referred to as basics:

So good spelling and clear expression and technical skills - punctuation, handwriting syntax and paragraphing - were most in demand as competences.

Once the employer is confident about basic written communication, he calls for skills which have not always featured too prominently in the English syllabus:

Listening and comprehension skills and oral skills.

The ability to analyse and then to report were obviously important specialisms.

Virtually every respondent selected "creative writing" and "good knowledge of literature" as the least valuable of the eight competences on offer.

Modern Languages

Which members of the workforce should be competent in a language other than English?

Whilst 100% of respondents thought that **Sales and Marketing** personnel needed competence, no one thought it to be important for staff involved in **Manufacturing**.

75% of respondents felt that **Managers** should have some linguistic competence with 50% believing that **Reception and Secretarial** staff should have some knowledge of other European languages. These skills, by and large, were not required of **Distribution and Manufacturing** staff.

* 100% of respondents believe spoken language skills to be of paramount importance.

* How is competence in a language rated in your company?

	1	2	3	4	5	Average Response
Highly	6%	0%	5%	0%	15%	5.2%
Useful Asset	80%	75%	75%	50%	65%	69%
Not important	14%	25%	20%	50%	20%	25.8%

What is the most important language for Thames Valley employers?

Spanish? German? Italian? French? Japanese? Russian?

Responses:

1. German 50.8%

2. French 44%

3. Spanish 5.2%

Italian occupied 4th place, with a few companies showing Japanese as extremely important.

Responses by category of company

1	2	3	4	5
German 52%	German 55%	French 75%	German 62%	German 60%
French 40%	French 33%	German 25%	French 38%	French 34%
Spanish 8%	Spanish 12%			Spanish 6%

What commercial reasons support this choice?

1 Existing market
2 Existing suppliers
3 Potential markets

New Technology

Are Word Processing skills equal in value to writing skills these days?

ALMOST! is the resounding answer.

Category of Company	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Yes	70%	40%	32%	20%	75%	47.4%
No	30%	60%	68%	80%	25%	52.6%

Is Touch Typing an important skill for all employees?

The majority of companies thinks it is!

Category of Company	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Yes	25%	65%	35%	68%	75%	53.6%
No	75%	35%	65%	32%	25%	46.4%

Would you require Touch Typing for non administrative posts?

The preferences here are more closely related to the type of company.

Category of Company	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Yes	60%	27%	20%	34%	75%	43.2%
No	40%	73%	80%	66%	25%	56.8%

Well over 40% of companies would require this specialised but universally useful skill.

Other Skills

* Which skills add value to an application? Almost 100% say ***keyboarding and practical skills***.
* Artistic, dramatic, musical and sporting skills are of interest but nothing more.

School Organisation in the U.K.

Should pupils repeat a year if they fail to reach the required standard? (A practice common in Continental Europe).

Category of Company	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Yes	79%	90%	75%	80%	80%	80.8%
No	21%	10%	25%	20%	20%	19.2%

Which school organisation would you favour?

a) Comprehensive Schools 11-16 (attended by all children)

b) Comprehensive Schools 11-14 (attended by all children) followed by selection according to aptitude and ability for: Grammar, technical or vocational schools from age 14.

c) Selective Schools - Grammar, technical, or general from age 11.

Here are the percentages of choice for *First Place*:

Category of Company	1	2	3	4	5	Average
a)	14%	20%	24%	22%	8%	17.6%
b)	36%	48%	31%	50%	55%	44%
c)	50%	32%	45%	28%	37%	38.4%

* The majority would like selective schools, or courses, to be provided from the age of 14 (this is not a system widely adopted in this country).

* 82.4% of respondents would like to change the present predominent pattern of organisation where all children attend a Comprehensive School.

* *"The demise of the Technical School was an educational disaster."*

Which low standards give rise to most concern for employers?

Universally: poor basics i.e. spelling, handwriting, grammar, punctuation and expression, computational and arithmetical skills.

The impression given is that employers want to see such faults eradicated for all recruits. At present "too many" show poor performance in these areas.

Also noted as worthy of improvement: motivation, enthusiasm and drive, social and interpersonal skills, general knowledge and communication skills, telephone manner.

Deficiencies like these clearly affect the chances of young people trying to get the job.

Would your company consider employing a young person with learning difficulties?
83% said **NO**
17% said **YES**

Would you like more information about young people with learning difficulties?
85% said **NO**
15% said **YES**

Questionnaire Part III: Recruiting Procedures

* Advertising in the Press is first choice with everyone.

* Direct contact with schools and careers office is widely practised.
  Other avenues: Careers conventions, work experience, Young Enterprise and help from Training Boards

* The Chamber is seen as helpful through "School Leaver"; information on selection and testing procedures; "CCi Training Newsletter"; advice on wage levels and knowledge of the market.

Letters of application

Employers give most marks for:

* Clarity of expression and quality of information.

* Legibility along with spelling and punctuation also make considerable impact.

* Knowledge of the company's requirements is not regarded as important at this stage.

References

Personal qualities coupled with honesty and integrity, are highly regarded. Relationships with fellow students are valued whilst deficiencies in performance and relevance of experience are not seen as important indicators at this stage.

Interviews

Appearance and manner coupled with an eagerness to learn are highly regarded. Confidence is important, as is the ability to think quickly. Experience is something yet to be acquired.

Recruiting procedures need careful and regular reviews

Useful practices are:

* Monitoring the quality of the intake against the schools and colleges from which they come

* Reviewing turnover and absenteeism

* Analysing results of advertising with regard to quality as well as quantity

* Consulting Training Groups and the Chamber

* Close review of all failures.

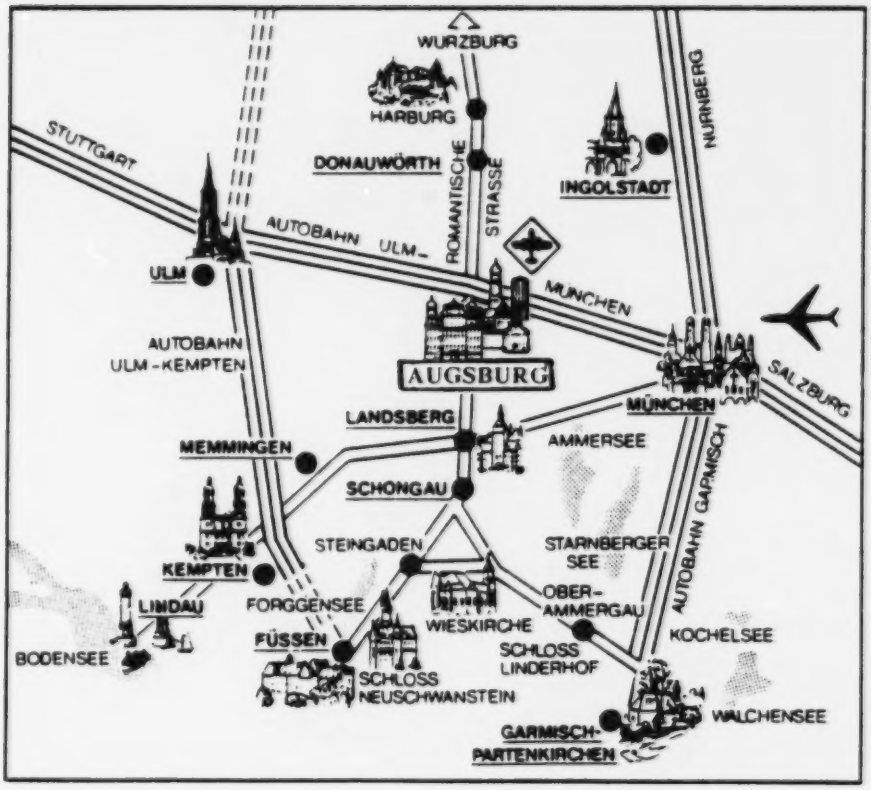
Recruitment and retention of staff will, along with training, be the key issues in the management of human resources in the Thames Valley in the 1990s.

Part V

The Augsburg Survey

The Augsburg Survey

in co-operation with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Augsburg



INTRODUCTION

As part of its 75th anniversary celebrations the Thames Chiltern CCi has commissioned a Survey in recruitment practices of companies in the Thames Valley. The research is specifically concerned with the age group 16 - 19 coming into work or training directly from school or college.

Are there common patterns in the recruitment process?

What educational standards are looked for and why?

What specific skills are highly regarded?

Will the introduction of the National Curriculum satisfy the perceived needs of employers?

What have employers in the Thames Valley to learn from employers in France and West Germany?

To address this last point, Thames Chiltern CCi has linked with its partner Chambers in Augsburg and Nantes who are giving valuable help and information so that Thames Valley members can better understand alternative approaches to recruitment of young people.

AIMS OF THE VISIT

1. To collect information about training programmes for young people from age 15 to 20+ in Augsburg;

2. to scrutinise the recruitment process;

3. to meet some trainees and training officers in a selection of local companies;

4. to collect up-to-date statistics to show trends in recruitment and training for young people in this age group;

5. to assess the role of the Chamber in the provision of training places, the conduct of examinations and to consider their role as a careers education support service;

6. to place this process firmly in its context within the Education and Training system in Bavaria.

Before we turn to the actual programme and the outcome of the visit, we need to place it in the context both within the Federation and within Bavaria.

Education, in West Germany, is a matter for the various Länder or Regional Governments. Here, first of all, is a diagram showing the general pattern in Germany (Source: Education in the Federal Republic of West Germany - an H.M.I. Report).

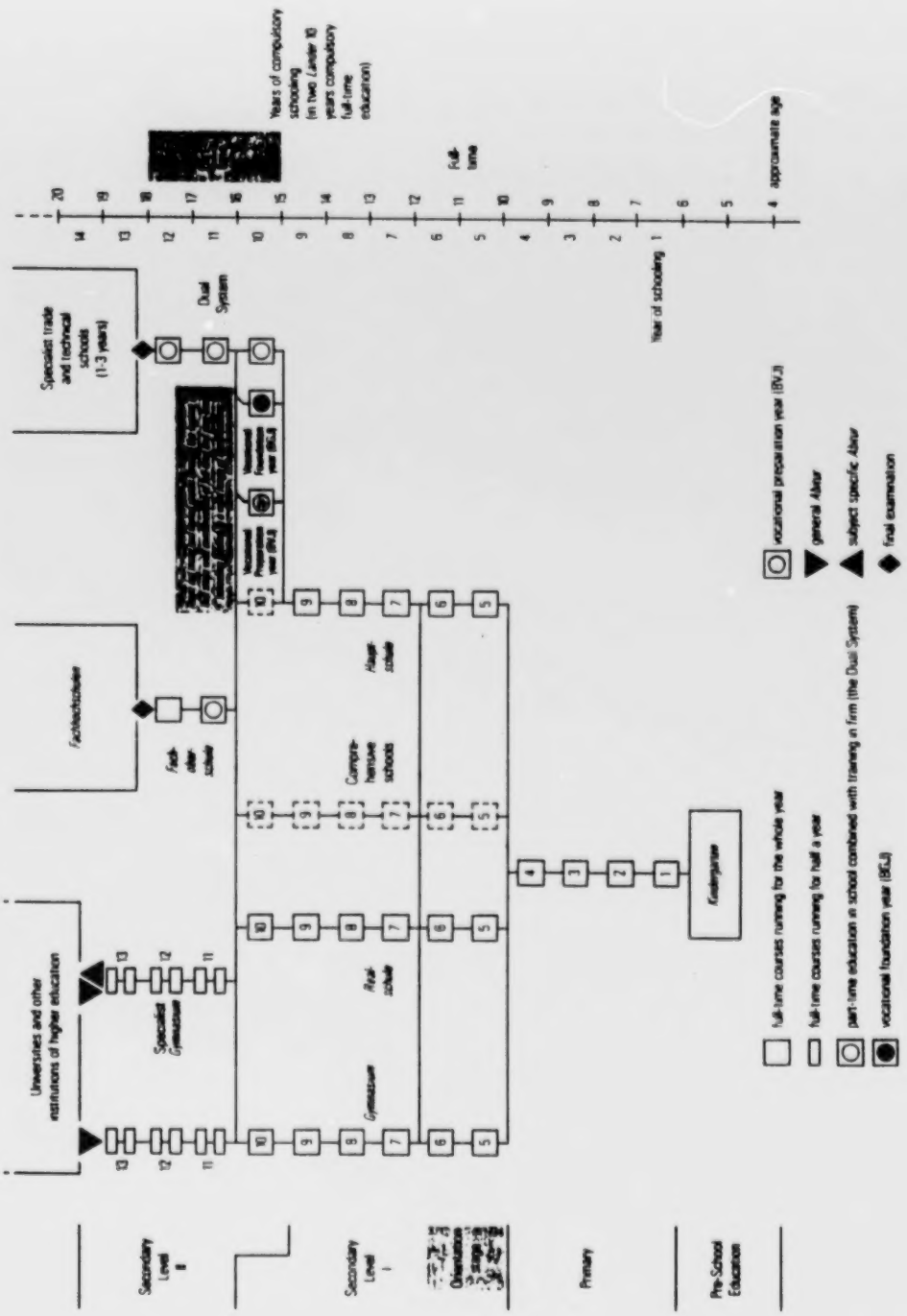
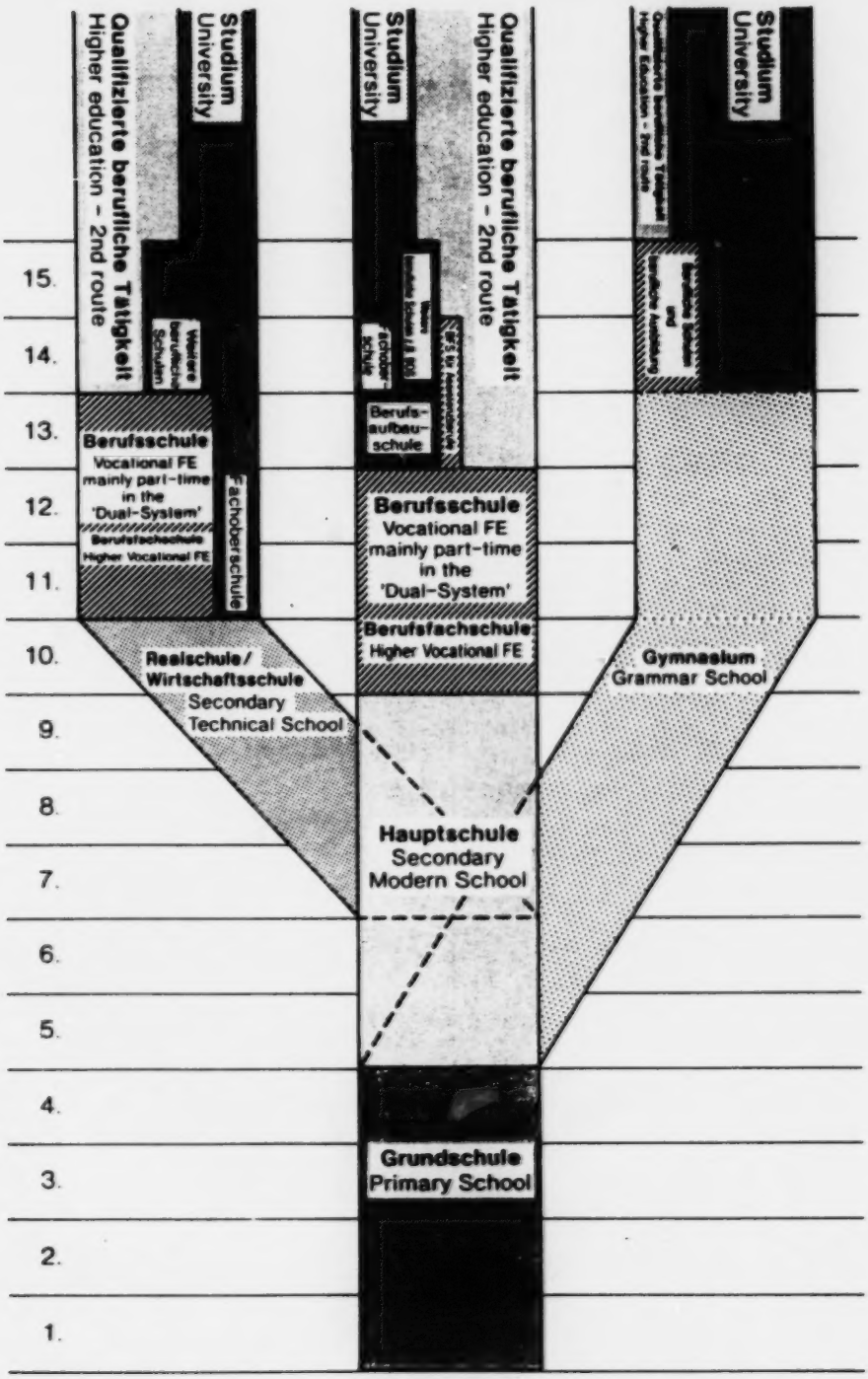


Figure 1 Simplified representation of the FRG school system

The Bavarian system is shown below. The concept of educational and career pathways is very persistent in German publications. The image re-inforces the idea that education and training is a continuous process and there are many ways to reach the highest levels. (Source: *School Pathways in Bavaria* - published by the Bavarian Ministry of Culture).



THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN BAVARIA

Some interesting features:

- Primary School (Grundschule) starts at the age of six with a fairly formal programme of reading, writing and arithmetic (particularly mental arithmetic).

- After four years around 30% of pupils move to the Grammar School (Gymnasium). They do so on parental choice based on the advice of the teacher.

- There follows a two year period of orientation during which children inappropriately placed will be moved to a more appropriate course.

- After six years of schooling approximately 30% of the pupils in the Secondary Modern (Hauptschule) move on to the Technical School (Realschule).

- In Bavaria they refer to year groups by the number of years completed in the education programme. Age groups could be misleading as at any time some 20% in any year group will be repeating a year (Sitzenbleiben) having failed to meet the required grade.

- There are three main ***qualifications*** for students to aim for:

  1. ***Abitur***. This is the key to University or other Higher Educational Institutes and is taken in the Grammar School (Gymnasium);

  2. ***Realschulabschluβ*** (also known as Mittlere Reife). This is the key to higher skill training places in the Dual-System and also for entry to Higher Vocational Schools (Fachoberschulen).

  3. ***Hauptschulabschluβ*** - Secondary Leaving Certificate which is the predominant level of entry into the Dual-System.

- 90% of young people who attend Technical or Secondary Modern Schools go on into the Dual-System. Students may leave school at the end of year 9 (age 15+) to enter this training/education system.

- Assessments in all schools in Bavaria are made on the *Notenskala* which is a 6 point scale. A distinction is a 1, average is 3. A student's overall performance (and all certificates are awarded for performance over a range of subjects and not for performance in an individual subject as in the U.K.) is, therefore, often presented as a 2 or 2.5 or 3, which means an average mark across all the subjects. The same 6 point scale is used in the Grammar School as in the Secondary Modern School. Employers relate the score to the type of certificate awarded but children of all abilities are able to reach a 1 or distinction.

- Pupils in all three schools are obliged to study a foreign language (predominantly English) and in the Grammar School two languages.

- All students must continue with a general educational course in some form up to the age of 18.

THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM IN AUGSBURG

The two main routes to follow are the *Dual-System* and the *full-time Vocational Educational System.*

The Dual-System

This apprentice system combines practical, on the job learning in companies, with theoretical instruction in Vocational Schools (Berufsschulen). The great majority of pupils leaving the Technical or Modern Schools are trained in this way.

- Apprentices (Lehrlinge) spend three days with the company and two days at school where they continue their general education as well as studying the theory associated with their specialism.

- Courses last for three years and training programmes produced and governed nationally, are set out in meticulous detail.

- Apprentices are treated like employees and have contracts setting out conditions of service, leave entitlement and pay. They receive DM651 per month (£235 at £2.77/£) in year One, DM721 (£260) in year Two and DM811 per month (£293) in year Three.

- The *philosophy* behind the Dual-System is the most important factor. The majority of German companies in the city relate the healthy state of the economy closely to the availability of a highly trained and increasingly better educated workforce.

- The *Training Pathways* all lead to *Doorways* and not to *Brick Walls.* A great deal of literature is produced showing trainees and their parents how to move through the system from Junior Secondary School Leaving Certificate right through to Technical University. There is enormous confidence in the will and determination of trainees to go as far as is possible within the system.

- There are strong efforts to change the culture within the population of immigrant workers where there is no tradition of entering training.

- Augsburg companies rode out the recession and period of unemployment in the 1980's by *increasing* the available number of training places.

- 12,000 companies in Augsburg offer training places. There are over 400 specialisms each with its training programme, organised into 13 major fields.

- Rates of pay for apprentices are fixed nationally by the companies and the Unions so that small firms and large ones have an equal advantage.

Full-time Vocational Education

At the non-advanced level there are two main strands in this provision for a comparatively small percentage of the population

- Specialised training, especially in Business Studies, combined with continuing general education for one or two years. The resulting certificate, as with Abitur, reduces the period of apprenticeship if then taken up by one year.

- A one year programme - BVJ or BGJ (see the HMI diagram page 2) which is designed for pupils who cannot get a School Leaving Certificate. It increasingly offers the alternative way into some apprenticeship programmes.

AUGSBURG

This Bavarian town, founded over 2,000 years ago by the Emperor Augustus, stands at the intersection of some of the most important trade and travel routes on the Continent. The centre of Renaissance architecture, music and painting, it was the home of the ancestors of Holbein and Mozart.

However, its present position as a key industrial area is foreshadowed by the town's most famous son, Jacob Fugger, he of the great banking and finance family who actually was a Master Weaver. The town has long associations with Manchester and the textile industry, and it was also home to Herr Diesel whose famous invention lies still at the heart of one of the biggest companies here, M.A.N.

THE PROGRAMME

Tuesday 17.04.1990

09.00 - 10.30	Introduction and discussion in the Chamber
11.00 - 12.30	Visit to 'Autefa' Engineering - Herr Losinger
14.30 - 16.00	Visit to Zeuner-Stärker, specialist metal and light alloy manufacturer - catalysers - Herr Ebersteder

Wednesday 18.04.1990

08.30 - 10.00	Visit to Modellbau Koch - highly specialised model shop (trains, boats, cars etc.) - Herr Koch
10.30 - 12.00	Visit to Fachoberschule, High School for Vocational Training - Herr Eibler
13.30 - 15.00	Visit to Siemens PC manufacturing plant - Herr Banzerus
15.30 - 18.00	Historic Augsburg - guided tour
18.30	Dinner at the Fuggerstuben by the kind invitation of Dr. Dieter Münker, Director of the Chamber for Augsburg and Schwaben.

Thursday 19.04.1990

08.30 - 10.00	Visit to Kieser - Printers and Publishers - Frau Kühnel
10.30 - 12.00	Visit to N.C.R. - PC and data business information systems, Dr. Pillhofer.
13.30 - 17.00	The Chamber - examination procedures and papers - statistics

Friday 20.04.1990

Translation and cataloguing of documents. Report framework.

THE COMPANIES VISITED

The companies kindly provided a variety of information much of which is in the form of brochures and booklets to do with recruitment and training. They are available for anyone interested.

Some Observations

- Zeuner-Stärker, one of the companies visited, (it makes catalysators for Rolls Royce!) estimates that the cost of training an apprentice is DM 50,000 (£18,050).

- Augsburg has a long tradition of training in the metal industry. There are many unfilled places as trainees move away from traditional industry. "They do not like to get their hands dirty any more" - Herr Ebersteder.

- Competition for electronic and computer based training outpaces the growth of places.

- Large and prestigious companies (like Siemens and N.C.R.) have a very wide field of applicants from which to select.

- Some companies - like Keyser - who operate on shift work do not recruit girls to technical training places. There is a law dating back to the 19th century which prohibits women from working at night!

- In preparation for 1992 the Ministry of Culture in Munich has announced (on the 20th April 1990 whilst I was there!) that <u>all</u> programmes in the Berufsschulen (vocational training schools) at <u>every</u> level, including craft apprentices and hairdressers, will be extended by 2½ hours per week so that <u>all</u> apprentices can learn English. Time for the extended programme must be found by the school from its 2 days and <u>not</u> by the company.

- I must record the overriding impression that both companies and parents were fully committed to support these young people until they completed their education and training however long that should take. The great majority of young Germans including those at University live at home with their parents.

Pattern of Recruitment

- All companies visited (bar one) showed a fairly common pattern i.e.

direct contact with local schools through work experience and pupil/teacher visits;
Information via the employment office;
Through own emp'oyer family and social network.

Careers conventions were seen as a novel idea which looked worth imitating.

- Tests - all said they worried about variability of standards in Leaving Certificates (particularly from Hauptschulen). They, therefore, relied on batteries of their own tests. They were particularly keen to test aptitudes in technical areas (see Siemens Test Paper).

- Interviews were often held in small groups of three or four, not singly. N.C.R., an American Company, was a notable exception here. They had a standard interview procedure lasting for about an hour and employing two trained interviewers. There was a big investment at stake!

- The bigger companies had many applicants who were initially sorted by the quality of their school leaving certificate. The mark for behaviour and cooperation given by the school was well scrutinised. The selected would come for tests and the best performers would be interviewed and offered training contracts.

Conclusions

The strength of the Dual-System is based on the fact that as a large majority of companies train apprentices, there is always a pool of skilled labour available. The system is designed to keep this pool as full as possible to avoid spiralling labour costs produced by skill deficiencies. Although it is expensive to train an apprentice, it is much more expensive to train a poorly qualified worker later ("if you think training is expensive, try ignorance").

Two comments to put into context the worries some employers have in Augsburg:

- "With a repeat year or other hold up it is possible for a boy or girl to delay qualification at Abitur until the age of 21. There is then National Service of eighteen months to be completed - we are now up to 23. German universities do not award first degrees, only master's degrees and the minimum period of study would be five years, more commonly seven years. This brings us to 28 or 30. There is an increasing tendency for young people to do an apprenticeship between Abitur and University. We are now 30 or 32. *Isn't this a little late to start work?!*"

- "I was for two years in England and failed completely to understand how your system of training works. My overall impression was that there was only chaos, no system. However, when I returned and considered the fact that British Industry exports first class goods throughout the world, I began to wonder whether our system was not a little too thorough and long-winded".

Sincere thanks to the many people who gave their time and expertise: Dr. Münker, Dr. Schneid at the Chamber; the representatives of the companies and the Vocational High School; our Driver without whom this tight schedule would not have been met, and particularly Dr. Joseph Amann who arranged the programme and guided us through it.

PROGRAMME OF VISITS, AUGSBURG APRIL 1990

Company	No. of employees	No. of Trainees	Types of Apprenticeship	Educational Standard Required	Personal Skills Attributes
Koch	16	4	very specialised model technician and salesman	Realschulabschluß Hauptschulabschluß	Strong personal interest in modelling, very strong motivation
Autefa	250	15 (5 in each year)	technical - metal	Hauptschulabschluß	
Zeuner-Stärker	1,150	55	technical + business administrative	Hauptschulabschluß with good scores in German, maths, phys.	good basic technical understanding for technical apprenticeship
Kieser	140	6 business 6 technical	Business/admin. technical/printing	Abitur, Realschul-abschluß & Haupt-schulabschluß	Ambition, good reasoning ability, self-confidence
N.C.R.	800	80	Business and Technical	Realschulabschluß with high scores 2, 1, or Fach-hochschule with specialist training 2 yrs or Abitur (3 or better)	
Siemens	6,200	220	a) Technical b) Business/ Admin	Realschulabschluß German, Maths, Physics not below 3; Hauptschulabschluß Maths + Physics not below 2	technical understanding, ability to concentrate, ability under pressure, reliability

SIEMENS
Test Information to Applicants for Skills Training

(Translation from the German)

In order to assess the aptitude for a particular skills training, Siemens AG conduct a psychological aptitude test. If you are interested in a skills training with us and want to take part in this test, we invite you to do so. Since you will obviously have questions as to the aim and course of this test, we would like to give you some brief information.

Why is the test being conducted?

For each job certain abilities are required. Their range is not detectable from school certificates alone. With this test we want to find out whether your skills and qualities coincide with those required for skills training at Siemens.

What value is attached to the test result?

The test result says something about your aptitude for skills training at Siemens. Together with your school marks, a personal talk, and the medical examination, it forms the basis for the decision whether you will receive a training contract from Siemens.

What does the test look like?

The test consists of eight psychological test groups and a group *Knowledge in basic mathematics*. Each test group is introduced by extensive introductory notes which explain what to do with the following problems. Furthermore, there are six examples before each test group. All problems have the same principle: with each problem come several answer suggestions, but only one answer is correct.

The problem groups begin each with the easiest problem and end with the most difficult one. A certain time is given for the work on each problem group. Basis for the setting-up was an extensive analysis of the requirements in the skills training jobs.

Can one prepare for the test?

The abilities contained in the eight psychological problem tests are the result of many years' processes of development. It is almost impossible to improve one's test results through preparation. You can improve your abilities in the problem group *Knowledge in basic mathematics* through preparation; it is recommended to revise the four basic maths groups.

Examples to some of the problem groups (reduced in size, see next page):

A. Where will the beam break if weighted more and more at point P?

B. Problems from every day life: It is not important to work out the result, but to think about the problem and to assess the result. The exact result is never contained in any of the answer options. You should chose the result that comes closest to the exact result.

"A cable of 98 mtr should be cut into two pieces such that the shorter piece represents two third of the length of the other. How long is the shorter piece?

1) 20 2) 30 3) 40 4) 50 5) 60 m?".

C. In this example you find in an upper box an original figure which turns up again in the comparisons below in the same size and the same position. There are superfluous lines in the comparisons but no line of the hidden original figure must be missing.

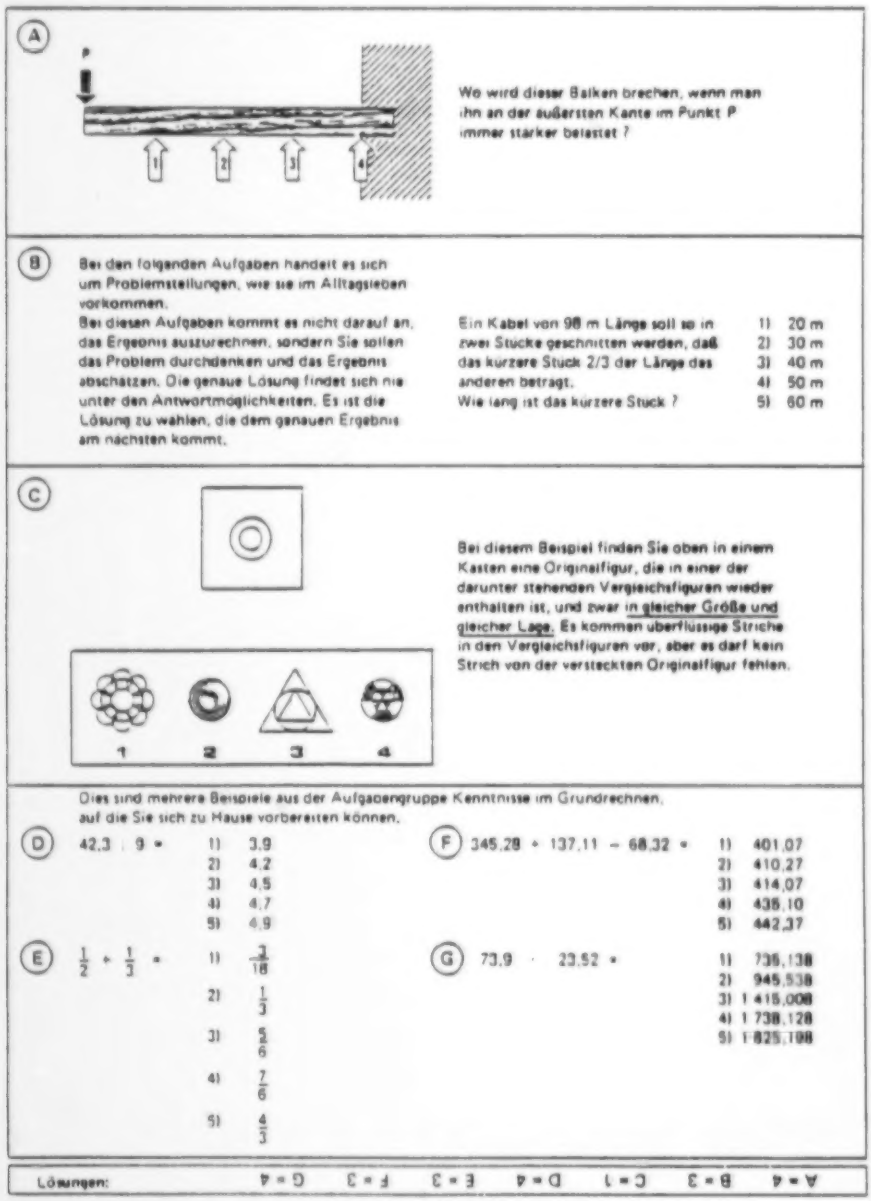
D. and

E. These are several examples from the problem group Knowledge in basic maths", for which you can prepare at home.

How long does the test last?

Including breaks the time taken will be approximately 2 ½ hours. As the test is conducted as a group test, you are asked to be on time.

We wish you much success
SIEMENS AG - Gewerbliche Bildung.


A
P
1
2
3
4
Wo wird dieser Balken brechen, wenn man ihn an der äußersten Kante im Punkt P immer stärker belastet ?
B
Bei den folgenden Aufgaben handelt es sich um Problemstellungen, wie sie im Alltagsleben vorkommen.
Bei diesen Aufgaben kommt es nicht darauf an, das Ergebnis auszurechnen, sondern Sie sollen das Problem durchdenken und das Ergebnis abschätzen. Die genaue Lösung findet sich nie unter den Antwortmöglichkeiten. Es ist die Lösung zu wählen, die dem genauen Ergebnis am nächsten kommt.
Ein Kabel von 98 m Länge soll so in zwei Stücke geschnitten werden, daß das kürzere Stück 2/3 der Länge des anderen beträgt.
Wie lang ist das kürzere Stück ?
1) 20 m
2) 30 m
3) 40 m
4) 50 m
5) 60 m
C
1
2
3
4
Bei diesem Beispiel finden Sie oben in einem Kasten eine Originalfigur, die in einer der darunter stehenden Vergleichsfiguren wieder enthalten ist, und zwar in gleicher Größe und gleicher Lage. Es kommen überflüssige Striche in den Vergleichsfiguren vor, aber es darf kein Strich von der versteckten Originalfigur fehlen.
Dies sind mehrere Beispiele aus der Aufgabengruppe Kenntnisse im Grundrechnen, auf die Sie sich zu Hause vorbereiten können.
D
42,3 : 9 =
1) 3,9
2) 4,2
3) 4,5
4) 4,7
5) 4,9
E
1/2 + 1/3 =
1) 3/16
2) 1/3
3) 5/6
4) 7/6
5) 4/3
F
345,28 + 137,11 − 68,32 =
1) 401,07
2) 410,27
3) 414,07
4) 435,10
5) 442,37
G
73,9 · 23,52 =
1) 735,138
2) 945,538
3) 1 415,008
4) 1 738,128
5) 1 825,198
Lösungen:
A = 4 B = 3 C = 1 D = 4 E = 3 F = 3 G = 4

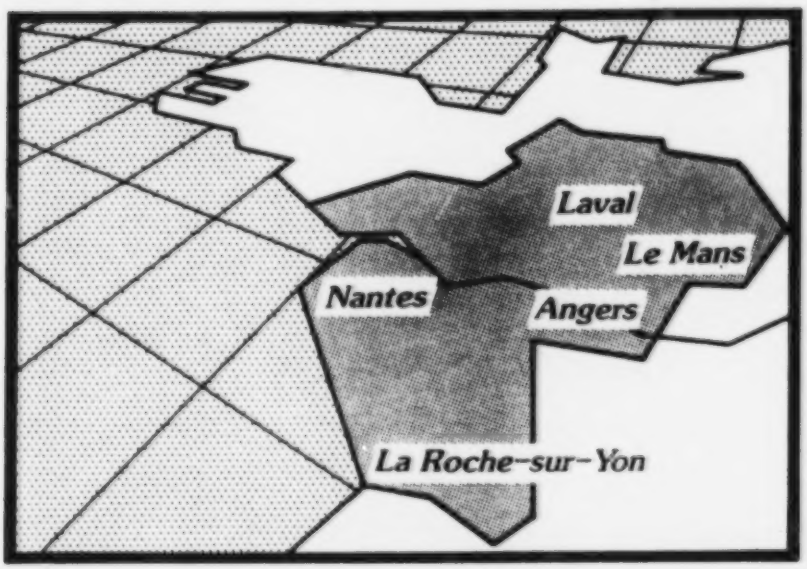
Part VI

The Nantes - Pays de la Loire - Survey

The Nantes Survey

in co-operation with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce for the Pays de la Loire, Nantes

PAYS DE LA LOIRE: DES ÉNERGIES D'HOMMES



Loire-Atlantique
Maine-et-Loire
Mayenne
Sarthe
Vendée

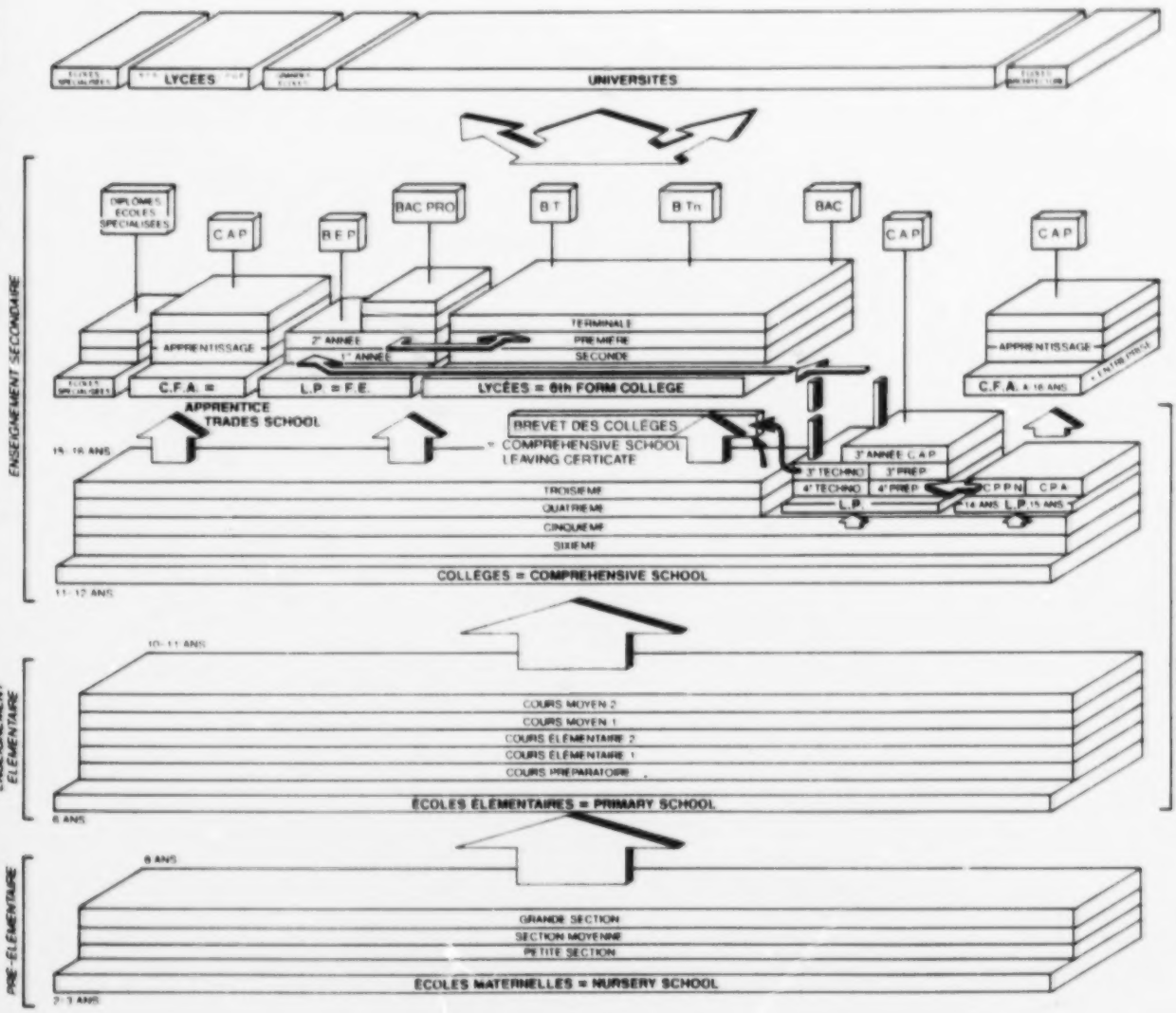
Aims of the Visit

1. To collect information about vocational education and training systems for young people from age 15 - 20+ in the region of Pays de la Loire;
2. to scrutinise the recruitment process;
3. to meet some personnel officers in a selection of local companies;
4. to collect up-to-date statistics to show trends in vocational education and training;
5. to visit a Lycée Professionnel to assess modern developments initiated to meet the needs of local industry;
6. to place this process firmly in its context within the education and training system in France.

THE FRENCH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The French pride themselves on their educational system and quite rightly so. Academic standards are higher in a school system which clearly attempts to apply to the majority of pupils those criteria of success originally drawn up for a minority.

Here is a diagram showing its organisation in the three major phases - Primary (age 6-11), Secondary I (age 11-16) and Secondary II (age 16+).



THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE PAYS DE LA LOIRE

Some interesting features

- Although compulsory attendance at Primary schools (Ecoles élémentaires) begins at the age of 6, virtually all four and five year olds plus 90% of three year olds attend nursery school (Ecole maternelle).

- Every *commune* (local district) of up to 2,000 inhabitants or more must by law set up a nursery school.

- This early start coupled with a very long standing tradition that children only progress beyond the first primary class when they can read, gives French children a very sound basis for what is to follow.

- The practice of keeping children down for a year until they 'make the grade', which traditionally affected 10 - 12% in any year group, is not as widespread as it was. The rule now is that the school can recommend a repeated year; if the parents disagree, they can appeal.

- In the Secondary stage I (12 - 16) all children attend the ***Collège***. Initially all teaching is in mixed ability groups. There are two stages, each lasting for two years: the observation stage and the orientation stage. By and large all pupils follow a common curriculum with, in many cases, additional classes laid on either to help the weakest (soutien) or to push forward with the most able (approfondissement).

- After the age of 14 some pupils, usually those academically weakest, may join the ***CPPN*** (Classe pré-professionelle de niveau). Here, although a general educational programme continues, a pupil is progressively prepared for a job. In the final year pupils on the CPA course (Classe préparatoire à l'apprentissage) are allowed to spend up to six months on work experience.

- The Secondary stage I phase is brought to a conclusion when a student attains his Brevet des Collèges or leaving Certificate (for the majority at age 16).

Secondary Stage II - The move towards technical and vocational education

In 1985 H.D. Lewis in 'The French Educational System' wrote "As in other countries, technical education does not enjoy equal status with non-vocational education, although it has become somewhat more highly regarded under the 5th Republic. Constant reminders by politicians and education officials about the equal value, nay nobility, of technical subjects have had as much to do with this, however, as righteous exhortation usually has. The principal impulse for such support has been the increasing realisation that a developing advanced economy depends upon a work force with ever more refined skills."

1990 sees this prophetic statement fully confirmed - technical and vocational education is well and truly on the move in France and specifically in the Pays de La Loire where it has been set as a clear target for development.

- The need to concentrate much more attention and resources on technical and vocational education and training has rapidly become apparent in the Pays de La Loire, as can be seen in the extract below. The region has, to its cost, neglected these areas but intends to undertake an ambitious programme.

"The Pays de la Loire make up 5.4% of the French population, with a strong concentration in the Loire-Atlantique which has a population of 1 million inhabitants, about one third of the Region. The main characteristic of this population is that it is expanding faster than those of the other regions, with a ratio of young people higher than the national average and a higher unemployment rate, especially among the latter.

What ought to be a demographic asset is not put to good use, and is even a handicap, since the level of training in the Pays de la Loire is currently one of the lowest in France: the Region ranks 16th (out of 20 regions) for the numbers of ***Baccalauréat*** graduates (end of secondary education) and 17th for higher education graduates. By merely taking into account the current population trends, about 15,000 job applicants should arrive on the market for each of the years to come. It is absolutely indispensible to better train these young people for the specialised jobs the regional economy demands and even for the technician and engineer jobs generated by the new industrial activities.

To this effect, the Conseils Généraux and the Conseil Régional have launched an ambitious programme to renovate the secondary education establishments, increase the number of places available in the existing lycées and colleges (secondary education), and to build new establishments. The corresponding increase in teaching and administrative staff is being implemented.

A major effort is also being undertaken throughout the region in favour of higher education which should affect research and advanced activities in a technological context. The creation over 5 years of 6 to 8,000 extra places for students at the ***Baccalauréat+2*** level, especially in medium-sized towns, such as the IUT (Polytechnics) of Cholet, Laval and La Roche-sur-Yon, whether already in existence or planned, is a target which must be achieved.

The University of Nantes, which was given a new lease of life twenty years ago, is currently developing rapidly, and one can be justified in thinking that the number of students will rise from 20,000 to 30,000 within less than 10 years. The ongoing project of a technological university should contribute in turning the local research and training resources into a major element of the science park which is being created."

"The Acknowledged Need to Promote an Asset: a Young Population" (Source: Plein Ouest - *"The Pays de La Loire economic area faces the 1990's)".*

- There is no clear cut downward demographic trend in France as there is in Great Britain and West Germany. In 1987 there were 8.53 Million young people from 15 - 24 years old. By the year 2000 this figure is estimated to drop by only 1 million.

- Only 10.5% of young people in this region fail to continue their education and training after the end of their compulsory period of attendance at a Collège. The institution which caters for the overwhelming majority - 80% of the age group - is the Lycée.

- ***The Lycée***. This name now covers a wide number of institutions catering for young people - the great majority - who continue their education and training after the age of 16.

  a) ***The General Lycée*** (Lycée d'enseignement général) caters for pupils who wish to prepare for the ***Baccalauréat*** which will entitle them to go on to Higher Education.

  b) ***The Lycée d'enseignement professionnel*** (LEP) caters solely for vocationally orientated courses, e.g. CAP (Certificate d'Aptitude Professionelle) and BEP (Brevet d'Enseignement Professionnel).

  c) ***The Technical Lycée*** - caters for students who wish to take the vocational Baccalauréat (BTn) and

  d) ***The Lycée Polyvaleant*** - caters for students who take both general and technical bacs.

  There are 400 general lycées, 300 technical lycées, 500 lycées polyvaleant and 1,350 LEPs in France.

- **CAP** (Certificate d'Aptitude Professionnelle) and **BEP** (Brevet d'Enseignement Professionnel) are the two major qualifications studied in the further education sector at the ***Lycée Professionnel*** (LEP).

- The CAP is more focused on a particular trade and has traditionally trained students to be cooks, electricians, mechanics, clerical assistants, hairdressers and so on.

- The BEP offers a wider based programme over some 50 routes which are divided into three broad areas: industrial; commercial and administrative; and health, social and catering.

- It was originally intended that the B.E.P. which trains a more adaptable workforce, should replace the CAP, but the latter still remains a firm favourite with industrialists.

- Both of these courses last two years and for an increasing number of students lead on to:

  The ***Baccalauréat Professionel*** or Bac Pro. This course takes three years. There are 14 specialisations at present and these are being developed and added to annually. It is aimed not at Higher Education but at direct transition to higher technician grade jobs. It is the flagship in the reformed and extended vocational education programme.

- The ***Technical Baccalauréat*** or Bac Tn, on the other hand, with its 16 occupation related specialisms is aimed at entry to short higher education programmes. One of the most prevalent qualifications required in Industry for high level technician entry is this *Bac+2* as it is called.

- ***Apprenticeships***: These account for a fairly small proportion of training places in the Region - around 2% of the age group in Further Education. Since 1971 an apprenticeship tax has been levied at the rate of 0.5% of the total wage bill. Companies can avoid this levy if they create training programmes of their own which are approved by the Regional Chamber.

- ***CFAs*** (Centre de Formation d'Apprentissage) are trade schools established by agreement between the local education authorities (or academies as they are called) and a regional Chamber such as Pays de la Loire. Although CFAs supported by Chambers only account for around 30% of the total, these schools are actually responsible for 45% of all apprenticeships.

- The fact that such a small percentage of young people are in apprenticeships shows how different is the approach in this region as compared to Augsburg. Vested interests in the Unions - particularly in the teachers' unions - appear set to keep this low.

Unemployment

Unemployment of young people from 16 - 25 remains a **major problem** even in an affluent, rapidly developing area like the Pays de la Loire. It is almost three times the level it is in Augsburg and means that many young people with formal vocational qualifications cannot find employment. It is, I am assured, the price to be paid for keeping inflation down.

- There are Government schemes which reward companies who take on unemployed youngsters but they are only palliatives. One of the commonest occurences in affluent Nantes, a university town with over 20,000 students, is to be solicited by young unemployed people begging.

- All vocational programmes have a fair element of general education in them including the apprentice-dual-system schemes. However, many industrialists prefer to do their basic training at Chambre des Métiers - Trade Schools. These are private and concentrate entirely on job skills without any educational content in the course.

Government Schemes

Various initiatives have been introduced to help young people who cannot find employment. Many of these, it must be remembered, actually have vocational qualifications but cannot find a job.

a) CES: Contrat Emploi Solidarité (employment solidarity contract) - duration: 3-6 months.

b) Actions de Formation Alternée (alternate training) - duration: 2-8 months

c) Stages d'initiation a la vie professionnelle (introduction to professional life) - duration: 3-6 months

All of these allow for payments to be made and fixed against percentages of the current SMIC (lowest minimum wage).

The Educational levels of those leaving the education system in 2000 is expressed as follows:

	1989	2000
II + I Long Higher Education	10%	25%
III Short Higher Education (Bac + 2)	10%	20%
IV Entry to Higher Baccalaureate	20%	30%
V CAP or BEP	45%	20%
VI or V No post 16 certificate	15%	5%

Naturally, there are many critics and doubters. Can such improvements be achieved? Will the skilled jobs market increase sufficently to take up the supply?

- There is a major attempt to build ***Pathways ('filières')***;

- BEP specialisations are being linked to a particular Bac Pro. In this way they will form the preliminary stage in a linked programme of vocational education;

- My observations in the Pays de La Loire Region would suggest that a programme is in hand to bring about these reforms.

  a) there is a systematic establishment of work experience programmes;

  b) there are a growing number of sandwich courses being set up with placements in companies of between 12-24 weeks in a 69 week course;

  c) there is a growing partnership between the Lycées Professionels and Industry.

Reform

The divide between a state-funded centrally controlled school-based vocational educational system and the world of work is causing a number of problems. (The term 'school' here refers to post 16 institutions like the Lycée Professionnel).

In 1987 Jallade* commented that

- " Industry can no longer expect the state vocational system to provide them with 'finished products'. The companies must assume a certain degree of responsibility themselves and must be prepared to make a greater financial contribution."

- There is a mismatch between the increasing demands of a new high technology industry and the schools (Colleges of Further Education) who remain somewhat aloof from the world of industry.

- The High Commission for Education and Economy (HCEE) has made proposals of measures aimed at improving educational standards.

  i) "As a long-term objective <u>all</u> pupils must be brought up to the final class of Collège level and <u>all</u> who do not go on to secondary level 2 <u>must</u> receive some form of vocational education."

---

* JALLADE, Jean-Pierre 'Les politianes de formation professionelle des genres à l'étranger. Rapport pour le Commissariat Général de Plan-Paris'.

ii) " The Comprehensive Collège course should differentiate courses in the last two years (14-16) of Level I in accordance with the appropriate range of achievement and motivation."

iii) " By the year 2000 it is proposed that the final two years in Collège will be distributed along the following three paths:

a) for 75% of the population it will be the General Educational Route;

b) for 15% of the population there must be established occupational pathways to a technological certificate;

c) for the lowest 15% of attainers there will be Vocational Preparation Years at Vocational Secondary School (LP) or at an Apprentice Training Centre to be followed by a two year course leading to CAP or BEP.

iv) The number of Baccalaureate holders must rise to 80% (50% of whom would take the traditional route; 25% the Bac Pro and 25% the BAC Tn)".

Reforms in Higher Education

The French Government has recently announced a five year programme of investment and expansion in Higher Education. Many would say it is about time that attention was paid to Europe's most overcrowded universities where student numbers have doubled whilst accommodation and teaching staff have remained static.

Over the past 30 years student numbers have increased by 5 fold to 1.4 million, well over double the number of students in Britain and representing one third of the age group. By the year 2000, numbers are expected to grow to 2 Million as a result of the target of taking 80% of the population to Baccalauréat level. The university in Nantes expects to expand from 20,000 to 30,000 students.

Should student numbers not be restricted? This idea is totally taboo in France where M. Jospin, Education Minister, has set his face against any change in the present policy of allowing anyone with a Bac to go to the university of his choice. "I am against selection" he declared, "and the population would never accept it".

France is the only European country contemplating such a huge increase in its higher education system. If they bring it off, we will find it extremely difficult to catch them up, assuming their policy is a better one then ours.

The Programme for the Visit

Monday, 28 May

13.00 hrs. Meeting with Mr. M. Rimbaud, Director
Zap Pizza
79, Rue Marechal Joffre, 44000 Nantes - Tel. 40.29.36.70

16.00 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Riviere, Director
Intermode Sarl,
Za La Gamierie, 44190 Clisson - Tel. 40.54.73.03

Tuesday, 29 May

8.30 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Metay,
Personnel Manager
ANPE
3, Rue Philestan Steinet, 44000 Nantes - Tel. 40.48.52.03

10.00 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Garcia, Co-Director
Ecole Normale Nationale D'Apprentisage
23, Rue Recteur Schmitt, 44012 Nantes - Tel. 40.74.25.10

15.30 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Goavec, Director
Monoprix
2, Rue Cavalière, 44000 Nantes - Tel. 40.48.20.20.

Wednesday, 30 May

10.30 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Michel, Personnel Officer
Waterman SA
BP 175, 44802 St. Herblain - Tel. 40.38.48.48.

My sincere thanks to Monsieur Balcon and his staff at the Chambre Régionale de Commerce et d'Industrie des Pays de la Loire for arranging such an interesting programme. My particular thanks go to Lorna Young at the Comett-Ouest Office, and to Silvana Homsi for her excellent interpreting services.

Augsburg and Nantes - Conclusions

- French and German recruiters stressed the essential importance of personal skills. All valued strongly: good motivation, enterprise, good communication skills and ability to work in teams as essential for students of every level of achievement.

- Poor writing skills - sloppy articulation - poor general knowledge - lack of enthusiasm and motivation were all commented on as deficiencies to be found in far too many pupils coming out of the schools be it in Augsburg, Nantes or the Thames Valley.

- Pupils who cannot find training places are very willing, with the support of their parents, to stay on for an extra year or two to improve their basic school leaving certificate. The age of sixteen does not stand out as the sort of watershed we find here. Some students will naturally take more time to qualify and they are positively encouraged to do so.

- The need for schools to work more closely with Industry was strongly emphasised in both countries. The development of work experience places for both pupils and teachers is being given an increasingly higher priority.

- The plea in all three regions was that the demands of Education should not become subservient to the short-term needs of Training. I am convinced that the simplest, in fact, ideal system for overcoming this problem lies in the Augsburg model where Education and Industry work together in the dual-system. It costs a lot of money but, in Bavaria, it looked like a very sound investment.

Appendix

The Thames Valley Questionnaire

THAMES VALLEY ENTERPRISE

CCi COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

thames-chiltern

The CCi Survey 1990

Major Sponsors: Thames Valley Enterprise and CCi Thames-Chiltern

Sponsors:

British Airways
British Telecom - Thameswey
Clifford Foods
Compair Broomwade
Equity and Law
Flexello
Hewlett Packard
I.C.I. Agrochemicals
Johnson and Johnson
3M
Northern Telecom Europe
Slough Estates

and assisted by

Augsburg Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK)

and

Chambre Régionale De Commerce et D'Industrie Des Pays De La Loire

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RECRUITMENT 1989

Note: This survey only refers to recruits to the company at ages 16 or 17 or 18 years.

1. **Total Number of Employees:**

2. **Total Number of employees recruited at 16 - 18 (calendar 89 at this site)**

AT:
a) 'A' Level

b) G.C.S.E. Level

c) Vocational Certificate Level

d) YTS Level

e) No specific qualification.

4. **Training offered in first year of employment to these employees in the following categories:**

	Total No. of days	In House	In College	Other	Name of certificate awarded	Not formally assessed
a) 'A' Level						
b) G.C.S.E.						
c) Vocational						
d) YTS						
e) Not specified						

5. **Number of Resignations in first year from these employees:**

a)
b)
c)
d)
e)

NIL returns are important

The questionnaire that follows is an attempt to survey *Recruitment Criteria* used in your company. It will be helpful to receive a completed part I for each level at which you have recruited in 1989 (i.e. 'A' level, GCSE, vocational qualification, YTS, or no set level). Please photo-copy additional sheets if you have recruited more than one employee at the same educational level but for different jobs.

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QUESTIONNAIRE - PART I

Educational Standard Required: 'A' LEVEL

Job / Position: _____

Age Range: _____

i) How many 'A' level subjects required? _____

ii) What subjects are required? _____

iii) What grades are required? _____

1. Why did you require 'A' level for this position?
(Please tick as many as are relevant)

		Yes	No
a)	The intellectual demands are high		
b)	The candidate will be expected to take professional exams		
c)	The company may wish the candidate to go on to take a degree		

d) Other:

i) _____

ii) _____

Educational Standard Required: G.C S E. (or 'O' Level / CSE)

Job / Position: _____

Age Range: _____

i) How many subjects? _____

ii) What subjects are specifically required? _____

iii) What grades are required? _____

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART I

Educational Standard required: VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION (e.g. E.I.T.B. - B.Tech. - N.V.Q.)

Job / Position: _____

Age Range: _____

i) Name the qualification

ii) Grade?

1. Why did you require this vocational qualification for this position?
(Please tick as many as are relevant)

a) The work requires specialist skill at this level	
b) This is the basic level to join the training programme	
c) We need fully trained employees on this job	
d) The level of pay is tied to this qualification	

e) Other:

i) _____

ii) _____

	Yes	No
2. Would you still take note of G.C.S.E. passes in considering the candidate?		

3. The stipulated vocational qualification fits into our training programme:

	Yes	No
a) As a basic qualification to proceed		
b) As an intermediate level		
c) We have no further training programme		

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART I

Educational Standard required: Y.T.S.

Job / Position: _____

Age Range: _____

1. ***Why did you require Y.T.S. training and not just accept someone straight from school?***
   (Please tick as many as are relevant)

   a) Y.T.S. is a good introduction to work and training ☐

   b) We have used our own Y.T.S. programme as an opportunity to select ☐

   c) We cannot afford to run our own programme, but rate Y.T.S. as a good foundation ☐

   e) Other:

   i) _____

   ii) _____

	Yes	No
2. ***Would you still take note of G.C.S.E. passes in considering the candidate?***	☐	☐

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART I

Educational Standard required: NOT SPECIFIED

Job / Position: _____

Age Range: _____

1. ***Why is no particular standard specified?***
   (Please tick as many as are relevant)

   a) G.C.S.E. ('O' Level/CSE) passes are not the best indicators of the person we are looking for ☐

   b) This is not a demanding job but one requiring patience and determination ☐

   c) The more qualified employee wants more training which we cannot supply ☐

   d) Personal characteristics are the most important requirement ☐

   e) Other:

   i) _____

   ii) _____

2. ***The most important characteristics sought for this position are:***
   (put in rank order, please)

   a) Honesty
   b) Reliability
   c) Physical strength
   d) Dexterity
   e) Pleasant manner
   f) Appearance
   g) Family known to the company
   h) Aptitude
   i) Willingness to tackle any task
   j) Confidence

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th

   k) Other:

   i) _____

   ii) _____

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART II

SPECIALISED SUBJECT AREAS

Mathematics

If you stipulate that a candidate should have numeracy skills what do you mean?

Place the following skills into rank order:

a) Calculating fractions and percentages of quantities

b) Calculating using ratios

c) Converting fractions to decimals or percentages

d) Solving problems using multiplication and division with numbers of any size

e) Mental arithmetic involving 4 digit numbers

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th

f) Other:

i) _____

ii) _____

	Yes	No
OR are they all of equal importance?		

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART II

SPECIALISED SUBJECT AREAS (cont.)

English

1. ***Which of the following skills for which attainment targets are set in the National Curriculum do you value highest when you ask for a pass in English at G.C.S.E. Level?***

   (Please put them in rank order).

   a) Creative writing

   b) Listening and comprehension skills

   c) Analytical skills

   d) Good knowledge of literature

   e) Technical skills - punctuation, handwriting, syntax, paragraphing

   f) Clear expression and good spelling

   g) Reporting skills

   h) Oral skills

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th

   i) Other:

   i) _____

   ii) _____

	Yes	No
2. *Are word processing skills equal in value to writing skills?*		
3. *Is touch-typing an important skill for your employees days?*		
4. *Is it a skill you would require of a recruit who is not going specifically into secretarial work?*		

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART II (cont.)

SPECIALISED SUBJECT AREAS (cont.)

Modern Languages

1. ***In future which members of your workforce will you expect to be competent in a European language other than English?*** Please specify:

   a) Reception ☐
   b) Sales / Marketing ☐
   c) Secretarial ☐
   d) Managerial ☐
   e) Manufacturing ☐
   f) Distribution ☐
   g) Others (please specify)
   i) _____
   ii) _____

2. ***Will competence in spoken language be more important than translation skills?***

Yes	No
☐	☐

   OR will they both be equally important?

Yes	No
☐	☐

3. ***Put in rank order the languages in the following list which you believe to be the most important for your company.***

   a) Spanish, b) German, c) Italian, d) French, e) Russian, h) Japanese

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th

4. ***What are your commercial reasons for nominating***

   1st .....
   2nd .....
   3rd .....

5. ***How do you rate competence in a language other than English in your company?***

   a) Highly ☐
   b) A useful asset ☐
   c) Not important to us ☐

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART II (cont.)

Other Skills

1. ***Please group the skill areas a) to f) into the appropriate categories***

   i) adds value to the application

   ii) of interest but no more

	i)	ii)
a) Artistic	☐	☐
b) Musical	☐	☐
c) Sporting	☐	☐
d) Dramatic	☐	☐
e) Keyboarding	☐	☐
f) Practical	☐	☐

2. ***Please name any skills or competences where <u>standards</u> among recruits (16-18) give you particular cause for concern***

   i) _____
   ii) _____
   iii) _____

3. ***Have you ever considered employing a young person with learning difficulties (i.e. having attended a special school)?***

Yes	No
☐	☐

4. ***Would you like information about employing young people with learning difficulties?***

Yes	No
☐	☐

QUESTIONNAIRE - PART II (cont.)

SCHOOL ORGANISATION IN THE U.K.

1. In West German schools pupils who do not reach the required standard by the end of any year, repeat that year. This can and does delay the attainment of a standard school leaving certificate by up to 3 years.

Would you feel this approach would benefit our education system if it were practised here?

Yes | No

2. The majority of European Countries have a selective school system after the age of fourteen (in West Germany after age 10).

Which organisation of secondary education would you find most beneficial to your company's needs:

a) Comprehensive Schools 11 - 16 (attended by all children)

b) Comprehensive Schools 11-14 (attended by all children) followed by selection according to aptitude and ability for: Grammar, Technical or Vocational Schools from age 14

c) Selective schools - Grammar, Technical or General, from age 11.

Please put in rank order

1st	2nd	3rd

d) Other:

i) _____

ii) _____

PART III

RECRUITING PROCEDURES (for employees age 16 - 18)

1. ***What methods do you rely on to recruit young people from schools and colleges at this age? (Please tick as many as are relevant)***

a) Contact with the Careers Office

b) Advertising in the local press

c) Letters to Headteachers/Principals

d) Leaflet to careers teacher/lecturer

e) Contact with CCI (Y.T.S.)

g) Please name any ways in which CCI is helpful in recruiting at this age level

i) _____

ii) _____

h) Others:

i) _____

ii _____

2. ***What are the major indicators that you would be looking for in the following? (Please arrange responses in rank order):***

Letter of application:

a) Clarity of expression

b) Quality of information given

c) Handwriting/legibility

d) Spelling and punctuation

e) Knowledge of the Company's requirements

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th

f) Others:

i) _____

ii) _____

OR are they all of equal importance?

Yes | No

PART III

RECRUITING PROCEDURES (for employees age 16 - 18) (cont.)

References:

(Please arrange in rank order)

a) Relevance of experience
b) Personal qualities
c) Deficiencies in performance
d) Relationships with fellow workers
e) Honesty and integrity

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th

f) Other:
i) _____
ii) _____

	Yes	No
OR are they all of equal importance?		

Interview:

(Please arrange in rank order)

a) Ability to think quickly
b) Relevance of experience
c) Clarity of expression
d) Confidence
e) Willingness to learn
f) Appearance and manner

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th

g) Other:
i) _____
ii) _____

	Yes	No
OR are they all of equal importance?		

PART III

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES (for employees age 16 - 18) (cont.)

3. What methods do you use to review and update your recruiting procedures?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Copies of application form and literature relating to recruiting, careers and training would be very welcome.

Thank you for taking the trouble to complete this Questionnaire. The results of this survey will be published in September 1990 and you will receive a personal copy.